



## **Alaskan Way Viaduct Inspection – Q and A**

### ***What is happening to the Viaduct? Is it sinking?***

The Viaduct is a 2.2 mile long double decker bridge made up of 185 sections. A portion of one of those sections, just south of the Columbia Street on-ramp, has settled about four inches since WSDOT started checking it after the 2001 Nisqually earthquake.

After intensive investigation, WSDOT determined that if this section settles a total of six inches, repairs to the bridge “footings” will need to be done.

### ***Will WSDOT have to close the Viaduct?***

With what we know now, we don’t think we will need to close the viaduct to make these repairs. The parking on the ground level near Columbia will be taken away during construction. Traffic on the viaduct itself should not be affected.

### ***When will WSDOT know if the repairs are needed?***

WSDOT is performing its semi annual inspection of the viaduct March 15 – 21. We will have a preliminary report on Tuesday, March 23 that will indicate the current status of this section of the viaduct.

### ***When could repairs begin?***

If needed, WSDOT will be able to advertise for bidders within two weeks of determining the need to make repairs. A contractor could be on-site within a couple more weeks, meaning work would begin about a month after it is determine that repairs are needed.

### ***How long will repairs take?***

Depending upon how long any utility relocations might take, we think the work could be completed in about two months.

### ***What would the repairs entail?***

WSDOT will strengthen and add support to each of the four footings (base) of this span. We will do this by installing a series of “micro piles” around the footings. These micro piles are like giant straws, 12 inches in diameter and 60 to 100 feet long. They will surround the base and be “capped” with concrete box to strengthen and “share the load” of supporting the viaduct.

### ***How much will it cost? Where is the money coming from?***

WSDOT has not yet determined the cost of potential repairs, nor a specific source of funds. The estimate will be available when the design work is completed and funds will be identified once we know we need to spend them.

### ***Why is this section settling? Will the repairs stop it?***

We don't know why this section is settling. This work should stabilize the area until a permanent replacement is built.